

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 05197 01 OF 02 121418Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----032208 121421Z /46

P 121316Z JUN 78 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6402

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 05197

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E.O.11652: GDDS.1
TAGS: FBOV, PBOR, JO, US, XF
SUBJECT: TALK WITH KING HUSSEIN--MIDDLE EAST

REF: A) STATE 141973, B) AMMAN 5078, C) STATE 143793

SUMMARY: AFTER A RUNDOWN FROM KING HUSSEIN ON THE SITUATION IN THE AREA, I WENT OVER WITH HIM TALKING POINTS IN REFTELS. MAJOR POINTS HE MADE WERE THAT SAUDIS WERE PUSHING A DIALOGUE WITH THE PLO, HE HAD RESPONDED POSITIVELY, BUT PLO HAD NOT YET COME BACK TO HIM. EGYPTIAN VISIT TO JORDAN LAST MONTH HAD RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT CONFUSION OVER POSITIONS OF VARIOUS PARTIES AND HE HAD STRAIGHTENED OUT HIS OWN POSITION WITH SADAT AND SAUDIS AT CONSIDERABLE LOSS IN HIS STANDING WITH BOTH PARTIES. NUMEIRI CONFIRMED INDIRECTLY TO HIM THAT SADAT IS THINKING OF USING OCTOBER 1978 SINIA II UNEF MANDATE RENEWAL AS A POINT TO MOVE BACK INTO ARAB GOOD GRACES BY TERMINATING UNEF MANDATE AND OCCUPYING NON-ISRAELI PART OF SINAI WITH EGYPTIAN FORCES. KING SEES THAT AS NEXT DANGER POINT AND IS REASONABLY CONTENT WITH THE SITUATION UNTIL THAT TIME. END SUMMARY

1. WHEN I SAW HUSSEIN JUNE 11 A GOOD PORTION OF MY CONVERSATION WITH HIM WAS DEVOTED TO AREA DEVELOPMENTS.

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2. HE SPOKE TO ME IN SOME DETAIL ABOUT HIS RECENT TALKS WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD IN SAUDI ARABIA AND THE VISITS BY EGYPT'S MUHARAK AND THE SUDAN'S NUMEIRI TO AMMAN.

3. FAHD EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR JORDAN TO REOPEN THE DIALOGUE WITH THE PLO. THE KING RESPONDED POSITIVELY AND

THE PLO GOT IN TOUCH WITH HUSSEIN AFTER HE RETURNED FROM SAUDI ARABIA. THE PLO MESSAGE IMPLIED TO HUSSEIN THAT

ARAFAT WAS READY TO DISCUSS "SOMETHING LIKE THE UAK PLAN" AND HUSSEIN REPLIED HE WAS READY TO TALK. THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING BACK FROM THE PLO YET.

4. FROM OTHER REPORTING, YOU WILL KNOW THAT MUBARAK VISIT SEEMS TO HAVE RESULTED IN COMPOUNDED CONFUSION OVER SADAT'S PROPOSAL THAT THE WEST BANK AND GAZA RETURN TO THE STATUS QUO ANTE. KING SAYS THAT SAUDIS WILL NOT BUY IT AFTER HIS TALK WITH THEM AND IMPLIED CLEARLY TO ME THAT WHILE HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE THE TERRITORY BACK HE HAD NO ILLUSIONS THAT ANYONE WAS OFFERING IT AND WAS NOW BEING PUSHED TO BE MORE NEGATIVE BY THE SAUDI VIEW THAT AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE SHOULD BE THE RESULT OF ISRAELI EVACUATION OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. HE SAID HE HAD MADE THAT POINT CLEAR TO SADAT IN SPITE OF MUBARAK'S (FROM HUSSEIN'S PERSPECTIVE) APPARENTLY DELIBERATE MIS-INTERPRETATION TO SADAT OF JORDANIAN AND SAUDI VIEWS. HE SEEMS TO SENSE HE IS IN THE DOG HOUSE WITH SADAT, BUT IN HIS PRESENT PRE-NUPTIAL ROSEATE MOOD DOES NOT SEEM OVERLY CONCERNED SINCE HE HAS SENT SADAT A MESSAGE SETTING DOWN HIS IDEAS. HE DID NOTE EPISODE HAS NOT HELPED TO IMPROVE HIS RELATIONS WITH SADAT. (LATER WHEN I WENT OVER MY TALKING POINTE HE DID NOT REACT AT ALL TO POINTS SECRET

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WHICH COVERED THE SADAT IDEA.)

5. NUMEIRI, HE SAID, OBLIQUELY CONFIRMED A POINT WHICH SADAT HAD MADE EARLIER TO JORDANIAN INFORMAL ENVOY AKEF AL FAYEZ AND WHICH HAD BEEN PASSED ON TO KING BY ZAID RIFAI. POINT WAS THAT IN OCTOBER SADAT WOULD REFUSE TO RENEW UNEF SINAI MANDATE, MOVE HIS OWN FORCES INTO THE NON-ISRAELI CONTROLLED AREA OF THE SINAI AND RESIST IF ATTACKED. KING SAID THAT HE SENT SADAT A MESSAGE ON THIS POINT BEGGING HIM "PLEASE, NO MORE SURPRISES*" KING THINKS THIS IS A SADAT PLAY TO REBUILD ARAB FENCES, BUT WHICH COULD LEAD TO A BROADER WAR IN WHICH ALL THE ARABS GET CHEWED UP. MEANWHILE, KING SEEMS CONFIDENT THAT SADAT WILL DO NOTHING UNTIL OCTOBER. I REMINDED HIM OF ANOTHER SADAT DEADLINE, THE SURPRISE PROMISED FOR JULY 23. KING SAID HE IS NOT TOO CONCERNED AT THIS POINT.

6. KING SAID NUMEIRI INDICATED A SHIFT IN THE SYRIAN VIEW. NOW ALL SADAT HAD TO DO WAS TO REFUSE TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE ISRAELIS AND GO TO GENEVA OR NEW YORK AND START BROADER TALKS. I REMINDED KING THAT WE TOOK AN OPPOSITE VIEW AND DID NOT FAVOR PRESSURE ON SADAT FROM ANY QUARTER TO GIVE

UP HIS DIRECT CONTACTS WITH ISRAELIS.

7. I THEN REVIEWED WITH KING SITUATION AS WE SAW
IT GOING OVER WITH HIM IN DETAIL THE TALKING POINTS PRO-
VIDED TO ME IN REFTELS. KING HAD LITTLE TO SAY EXCEPT
TO NOTE THAT HE DID NOT FEEL WE SHOULD BE TOO OPTIMISTIC

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----032231 121423Z /46
P 121316Z JUN 78 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6403

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 AMMAN 05197

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ABOUT BEGIN RESPONDING VERY POSITIVELY TO OUR TWO QUES-
TIONS. HE SEEMED PLEASED BY OUR WILLINGNESS TO PRESENT
OUR OWN VIEWS AT SOME POINT AND BY THE SECRETARY'S AND
THE PRESIDENT'S CONTINUED RESOLVE TO STAY CLOSELY INVOLVED
IN THE PEACE PROCESS.

8. COMMENT: KING GAVE ME NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT HE
HAS CHANGED HIS GENERAL VIEW THAT BEGIN AND THE ISRAELIS
ARE NOT GOING TO MOVE AND THAT HE SEES NO CHANCE FOR U.S.
SUCCESS IN MOVING THEM. I TOLD HIM THAT ANY POSITION WE
WOULD PUT FORWARD WOULD NOT FULLY PLEASE EITHER SIDE. HE
SEEMED IN A LESS TROUBLED MOOD NOW THAT HE HAS DECIDED TO
REMARKY AND THE POINT THAT OCTOBER BECOMES THE CRUCIAL
TIME ("AUTUMN IS A TIME FOR WAR IN THE AREA") SEEMS TO
LEAVE HIM SOMEWHAT MORE RELAXED THAN HE WAS A MONTH AGO
WHEN HE WAS PREOCCUPIED BY THE NEAR IMMINENT DEMISE OF
SADAT AND THE MODERATES IN THE ARAB WORLD. PICKERING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEBRIEFINGS, DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, PEACE PLANS, BRIEFING MATERIALS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978AMMAN05197
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DC IS GS PER KELLY SS/I
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850101-1474
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780672/aaaacjou.tel
Line Count: 163
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f09ebf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 78 STATE 141973, 78 AMMAN 5078, 78 STATE 143793
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2401082
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TALK WITH KING HUSSEIN--MIDDLE EAST
TAGS: PGOV, MPOL, US, XF, JO, (HUSSEIN I)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f09ebf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014